

Shenley Fields Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103142
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	376833
Inspection dates	3–4 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Bogusia Matusiak-Varley

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–4
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	58
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Chatham
Headteacher	David Aldworth
Date of previous school inspection	10 June 2009
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Thirteen lessons were observed involving six early years' practitioners. Discussions were held with parents and carers, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including teachers' planning, observations made on children and records of their progress. Twenty-five questionnaires from parents and carers and six from staff were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How well the nursery tracks the progress of different groups of children especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.
- Governors' involvement in evaluating the effectiveness of the nursery.
- How effectively the nursery promotes community cohesion.

Information about the school

The nursery is part of a Children's Centre which serves the Bartley Green and Weoley Castle wards of Birmingham. The majority of families in the area are from White British backgrounds with a very small proportion of families from other heritages with no predominant ethnic group. A very small minority of children are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The number of children identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The nursery offers a mix of full and part-time places. An inspection of the children's centre and early year's child care provision had been undertaken previously and has been reported on separately. The nursery has received the Healthy Schools Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The nursery provides a good quality of education. Parents and carers are delighted with what is on offer. Children experience a memorable start to their learning where they rapidly acquire skills that prepare them for their next stages of education. There are notable strengths, including children feeling exceptionally safe and demonstrating impeccable behaviour due to outstanding care, guidance and support and exemplary safeguarding procedures. Children have excellent knowledge of healthy lifestyles and know about the impact of exercise on their body.

Outstanding partnerships with parents and carers and excellent relationships permeate the nursery. One parent, speaking for many, said 'The nursery is just fantastic, I can't fault it.' Another commented, 'Our children are exceptionally happy here and they grow in confidence.' Attendance is good because even if children are ill they want to attend nursery to be with their key persons.

When children join the nursery their skills and abilities, especially in communication, language and literacy and personal, social and emotional development, are below those expected for their age. All children have equal access to good learning opportunities both indoors and outdoors. Children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language, make good progress but there are times when more capable children are not sufficiently stretched. This is because teachers do not use questions that extend these children's thinking skills and teachers' planning does not identify precisely enough the skills that these children need to learn. Good progress is attributable to good teaching and secure tracking of data. The deputy headteacher has introduced a very comprehensive tracker which clearly identifies progress of different groups.

Staff know the children exceptionally well and do much to encourage their uniqueness. However, there is a lack of uniformity among them in the way that they identify the next steps of learning in their observations, a matter which the headteacher and deputy headteacher know needs improving. Activities planned follow children's interest levels very well but, occasionally, teachers fail to 'seize the moment' in order to deepen children's learning. This results in some more capable children not being sufficiently challenged. All staff are very committed to ensuring exceptionally high levels of welfare and children respond positively to the very encouraging attitudes shown towards them.

Responses to staff questionnaires show morale is high. This is because of the good

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leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher who have galvanised staff into providing children with exciting learning opportunities both indoors and outdoors. Safeguarding practices are exemplary in that all staff know the procedures that are to be followed should any issues arise. Self-evaluation is accurate and the governing body are very supportive of all aspects of nursery work. They fulfil their statutory duties but are at the early stages of evaluating cost effectiveness of spending. This is because the school development plan, while focusing on all the correct priorities, has rather vague success criteria which are difficult to monitor. Given the nursery's good track record of improvement since the last inspection in developing secure tracking systems for children learning English as an additional language, and improving the quality of teaching where there are a few examples of outstanding teaching, the nursery's capacity for improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that more capable children are consistently challenged by:
 - improving the quality of teachers' planning to reflect skills that need to be acquired in all activities undertaken
 - improving teachers' knowledge of questioning that deepens children's thinking skills.

- Improve the quality of school development planning by clearly identifying success criteria on actions undertaken so that governors can monitor the impact of the nursery's provision on children's outcomes.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children**2**

Children love coming to the nursery, as demonstrated by good attendance. 'My child doesn't even kiss me goodbye, he is that eager to see his key person,' said one delighted parent. Children play well together; they take turns and develop good team work. They make good progress in acquiring early reading, writing and number skills and happily use computers and programmable toys. These skills contribute well to their future economic well-being. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those learning English as an additional language, make good progress because targets on their individual learning plans are used well in planned activities. Children have excellent knowledge of keeping safe and look out for one another's safety outdoors. They know not to walk in front of the swinging rope and take great care combining materials to build the den. Behaviour is exemplary as staff consistently reinforce accepted ways of working and plan exciting activities both indoors and outdoors.

Children have excellent knowledge of healthy lifestyles; they eat their fruit and healthy snacks with glee, drink milk and delight in making healthy fruit loaves. They can make their needs known because they are taught the language of feelings and emotions. They are not afraid to taste a variety of fruit and different vegetables. Children value their nursery community and collect money for the Acorn Charity.

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They know their own community well as they are regular visitors to the local shops and they have links with a school in Kenya. They eagerly tidy up; they tend their garden regularly and understand the importance of recycling. Children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are curious about the world around them and they marvel at the wide variety of purses that they use in their play. They love music and participate fully in both listening and creating their music. They respect one another and their excellent behaviour results from strong moral development in understanding right from wrong.

These are the grades for children’s outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Children’s achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Children’s attainment ¹	3
The quality of children’s learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children’s behaviour	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Children’s attendance ¹	2
The extent of children’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

A good range of interesting curriculum opportunities in both the indoor and outdoor environment extend and broaden children’s experiences and contribute to their love of learning. The outdoor environment is a ‘haven of adventure’ and reflects good opportunities for learning in all six areas of learning. There is a good balance of adult led and child initiated activities and children’s interest levels are acted upon. On the rare occasion, some staff miss opportunities to deepen learning by intervening and taking the learning to the next level, as a result more capable children repeat what they know without being fully extended. Children are effectively encouraged to make choices between independent and focused group work. Teachers have good subject knowledge and have ensured that the environment is enabling for all groups of children to access learning. In the best lessons, teachers consistently upgrade children’s language and link the learning with home experiences. ‘Do you help

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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mummy bake? I can see that you have cracked squishy eggs before!’ Children think of themselves as expert learners because of the good encouragement and praise used by staff. Assessments are made regularly but this information is not always translated into children’s learning journals resulting in inconsistencies in identifying the next steps in learning. This, occasionally, limits progress of more capable children who could be achieving more.

Children celebrate one another’s cultures; they cook Chinese food, read stories about children in different countries and honour one another’s differences. Outstanding attention to welfare and well-being results in excellent relationships. Children know that they are cherished and well looked after so they are willing to take risks, such as climbing high on the outdoor climbing frame. Relationships throughout the nursery are outstanding. All staff model respect towards one another and there are good links with professionals from the Children’s Centre such as health visitors, speech and language therapist and educational psychologist. There are good arrangements for introducing children and their families in the nursery and everyone is made to feel welcome. Good links exist with primary schools to ease children’s moves to the next school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets children’s needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, very ably supported by the acting deputy headteacher, has high expectations and will stop at nothing to ensure all children get a ‘good deal’. Systems for promoting safeguarding are excellent and known by staff. All staff have been trained on child protection and are very vigilant regarding children’s welfare. There is a common sense of purpose among all staff in supporting children and their families in building self-confidence and self-esteem. Partnerships with parents and carers are outstanding because of the way the nursery enables them to become true partners in their children’s learning. Quick and accurate signposting to a variety of agencies enables parents and carers to access the help that they need.

Teaching and learning are effectively monitored and staff performance management is regularly undertaken with targets identified for improvement. The nursery is developing into a hub of reflective practice with staff keenly striving to improve on previous best performance. Self-evaluation is accurate and the governing body is actively involved in the nursery’s development. All requirements for safeguarding and

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children’s health and well-being are in place but monitoring of outcomes of actions identified in the school development plan is not sufficiently rigorous. The drive for equality of opportunity is at the heart of the nursery’s work. Monitoring of achievement by gender and ethnic groups informs school development planning and subsequent budget allocation. A very thorough community cohesion audit and action plan ensures that the nursery is promoting cultural diversity effectively. Children’s good achievement and enjoyment clearly shows that the nursery provides good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

Around 43% of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire. Conversations with them, coupled with an analysis of questionnaire responses show that parents and carers are unanimous in their appreciation of what the nursery provides. Inspection evidence supports the very positive views of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Shenley Fields Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 25 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 58 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	18	72	7	28	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	20	80	5	20	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	14	56	8	32	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	52	10	40	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	18	72	6	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	16	64	9	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	60	9	36	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	12	48	11	44	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	14	56	11	44	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	56	9	36	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	56	9	36	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	64	8	32	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	19	76	6	24	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its children’s needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its children. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



5 October 2011

Dear Children

Inspection of Shenley Fields Nursery School, Birmingham B31 1BU

Thank you for helping us to find out about the wonderful things you do during your time in the nursery. We really enjoyed seeing you work and play. Thank you for the very tasty fruit loaf; I have taken the recipe and will try it out myself at home. It was lovely to spend time with you and see how happy you are and how well you learn. I can see that this is because of the way in which your headteacher, acting deputy headteacher, governing body and staff cherish your uniqueness. They take exceptionally good care of you and you feel very safe. Your behaviour is outstanding and you are very kind to one another. You learn well because of the good teaching and you are prepared well to go to the big school. You attend a good nursery and your headteacher is constantly looking at ways to make things better for you. Your outdoor area is an exciting place to learn. You know so many things about being healthy and staying safe, well done! You attend regularly and this helps your learning. Your parents and carers are delighted with the fact that you love coming to nursery.

We have asked your headteacher and your teachers to be even more specific when planning your tasks so that you can learn even more, especially those of you who find learning easy. We have also asked your headteacher to improve a very important document called the school development plan by identifying the kinds of things that the governors can measure to see how well your nursery is improving. You can help by telling your teachers if the work you do is too easy and by telling the governing body how your learning is getting better as a result of the decisions they make.

Yours sincerely

Bogusia Matusiak-Varley
Lead inspector

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